Subject: French ecu set in the cover of an old American tankard made by Arnold Collins, belonging to the School of Design.

Richmond, Jean

[Rhode Island School of Design
Providence, RI]

1933

Rhode Island School of Design
Providence, Rhode Island

March 29, 1933

My dear Mr. Wood,

I am enclosing a rubbing of a silver coin which is set in the cover of an old American tankard made by Arnold Collins, and owned by the School of Design. As you can see, the obverse has been badly worn by repeated polishing. I take it for granted that it is French and of the time of Louis XV, but I would be very grateful indeed if you could tell me the name of the kind of coin or give me any other information about it, as a friend of mine is planning to write an account of the tankard. The inscription on the reverse is: BENEDICTUM SIT NOMEN DOMINI, and on the obverse, as far as I can make out: LU - - XV. D. G. FR. ET. NA - - -. I hope that this is not troubling you too much.

It was a great pleasure to see you last summer. Mother and I wished that we had had time to see the Numismatic Museum. She asks to be remembered to you.

Most sincerely,

Jean Richmond

March 30, 1933.

Miss Jean Richmond
Rhode Island School of Design
Providence, Rhode Island.

Dear Miss Richmond:

In the absence of Mr. Wood we are taking the liberty of answering your letter to him. Mr. Wood is now recuperating in the hospital from an operation performed over a week ago. Your letter will of course be referred to him.

The coin of which you sent a rubbing is a French ecu. The most important part of the coin cannot be seen on your rubbing, that is the letter at the end of the word DOMINI and the beginning of BENEDICTUM. There should be a letter there which tells at what place the coin was made, that is, the mint mark. These coins are quite common and in worn condition are hardly worth more than their silver content. The inscription on the obverse, that is the portrait side, is as follows: LUD. XV. D. G. FR. ET. NAV. REX., which means Louis XV With God's Grace France and Navarre King.

Very truly yours,

RR:JG

Assistant Curator

Rhode Island School of Design
Providence, Rhode Island

April 7, 1933

Mr. Robert Roelson, Assistant Curator
American Numismatic Society
New York City

My dear Mr. Roelson,

Thank you very much indeed for your prompt reply with the information on the French coin. You told us exactly what we wished to know. I have been away for a few days, otherwise I should have thanked you sooner. As you appear to be interested in the mint mark, I enclose a rubbing of the part of the coin on which you said it would be. The mark seems to represent a small animal.

I was very sorry to hear of Mr. Wood's illness and hope that he will be better soon.

Gratefully yours,
Jean Richmond

Dear So and So.

The mintmark on the French coin is supposed to be a Cow (sic!) the mintmark of the town of PAU, capital of the Department of Basses Pyrénées. This town of Pau later became famous as the birthplace of Jean Baptiste Bernadotte, Marshal of France, Napoleons Brother in Law and later King of Sweden under the name of Carl XIV Johan, died 1844, perhaps this information about the town will add a little more interest to your article about your cup.

April 8, 1933.

Miss Jean Richmond
Rhode Island School of Design
Providence, Rhode Island.

Dear Miss Richmond:

I have your letter of April 7th enclosing the rubbing. The mint mark on the French coin is supposed to be a cow (sic!) the mint mark of the town of Pau. capital of the Department of Basses Pyrenees. This town of Pau later became famous as the birthplace of Jean Baptiste Bernadotte, Marshal of France, Napoleon's brother-in-law and later King of Sweden under the name of Carl XIV Johan, died in 1844. Perhaps this information about the town will add a little more interest to your article about the cup.

Very truly yours,

RR:JG

Assistant Curator